

AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

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fact is very fully acknowledged in the contemporary notes of Colonel House, reproduced in his "Intimate Papers" and they place beyond dispute the fact that Wilson was fully apprised by Balfour of the nature of these arrangements. Wilson was unwilling to discuss them in detail, because on the one hand it was not at that stage possible to modify the terms of the secret treaties, and on the other, he clearly hoped that by the time peace was made, America would have established herself firmly enough inside the counsels of the victorious Powers to be able to secure modifications if she so willed.* He was obviously anxious not to be informed in writing of the details as he did not wish to be embarrassed by being "affected with notice." But the statement subsequently made by President Wilson before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 10th August, 1919, that "the whole series of understandings were disclosed to me for the first time when I arrived in Paris for the Peace Conference," is a palpable misrepresentation of the true facts. By that time however his health was seriously undermined and he was on the brink of his tragic breakdown. A lapse of memory was therefore pardonable. As it affects the relations between two great countries I feel bound to correct the mistake. Good faith is essential to good understanding between nations as well as

individuals.

On 23rd May, 1917, Mr. Balfour and his party left Washington for Canada, where they made a short visit before starting back to England on *Balfour visits* 31st May. Before leaving the States, he *Canada* suggested that it would be desirable to establish a permanent British Mission there, to maintain liaison with the American Government, and co-ordinate the activities of the various